



When Your Number is Called

Youth Minister's Pen by Titus Neuenschwander

It was the most exciting high school football game that I have ever attended. Even halftime proved to be equally thrilling. Every home football game, a local bank sponsors a halftime field goal kick. Everyone is given a ticket when they enter the front gate to attempt a 25 yard field goal for a cash prize of \$500. The winning ticket was announced as 934.

I was talking when Travis, my father-in-law nudged me to check my ticket. Before I could even get my ticket out my pocket Travis quietly said, "That's me." I smiled at the thought. My father-in-law is always kidding around. Then I looked down at my ticket. It read 0000933. Travis came in right behind me. He wasn't joking after all! Travis excitedly stood up, holding the winning ticket over his head.

In the short seconds that followed, excitement flooded my mind. Excitement in that I may have the opportunity to stand before the sold out crowd, have my name and Memorial Christian Church announced to all, display my hidden talent of field goal kicking, and win my Father-in-law \$500. The excitement faded and was quickly swallowed by fear. What if I missed? What if I shanked the kick in the stands and fell face first to the turf? What if I took the honor of being the best halftime entertainment in Bomber history? My friends may ridicule me the rest of my life. I could foresee strangers approaching me with a smirk saying, "Hey nice job the other night," then busting out into laughter.

This experience got me wondering. Have there been times in which God has called my number? Has God called your name to complete his purposes?

Do you remember Queen Esther? Her people were in danger of being routed by an enemy in the king's inner circle. If she remained silent and did nothing, her life and countless others

may have been slain. Then the words of Mordecai convinced her to act, "who knows, but that you have come to a royal position for such a time as this." Her number was called. She stepped forward in boldness that out-weighed fear and the Jewish people were delivered.

Of course the same can be said of so many people throughout history. Moses, though slow in speech, became God's great spokesman and leader. The Bible records that "Since then, no prophet has risen in Israel like Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face."

Gideon was cowering in a hole when an angel greeted him saying, "The Lord is with you mighty warrior." Gideon's number was called and through him the Lord delivered victory.

John the Baptist, though he lived in the wilderness, dressed in camel's hair, and ate an interesting diet of locusts and honey, was chosen to preach to the crowds preparing the way for Christ. He was described by Jesus with these words: "I tell you the truth: Among those born of women there has not risen anyone greater than John the Baptist." John had his number called.

Ephesians 2:10 brings great encouragement and responsibility as Paul writes: "For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."

This leaves little doubt that there are times in which God calls our number to accomplish his purposes — good works that bring God glory and fulfill His plans. What are these good works? We do not always know. But one thing is certain. We serve Him best when we step forward in obedience despite fear of humiliation or failure and answer, "Here am I, send me." Send me to encourage the broken. Send me to assist the children. Send me to compassionately and boldly share your truth. Send me to help the weak. Send

me to straighten the paths of the wayward. Send me to raise children committed to God. Send me to point my grandchildren to Jesus. Send me.

I never made it to the football field to kick for the prize. My fear made me hesitate. And in those seconds of hesitation, another boldly volunteered and took the ticket. The “what if” factor drives me crazy. What if I grabbed the ticket regardless of fear or lack of self confidence? Could I have made it? I will never know. I missed out when my number was

called. This time I missed out on an opportunity that really didn't matter. Let us make sure that when God calls us to complete His purposes that He prepared in advance for us to do, we do not hesitate.

And the number is. . .